to see that a mighty mass of dust had been raised about a very plain matter—

In the same way, I dispose of this great humbug of organic sin:— Society may be wrongly organized, & its wrong organization, legally authorized, a great variety of sins:— but how does the man act, when in the midst of such organic sins?— who the organic sin? or not?— Slave-holding from its very nature must be an individual sin— the slave may be held, either by one individual, by his own strength— or by another individual, by means of bad organic laws:— but in both cases, slave-holding is an individual sin; & in the last case, the sin is rather the worst.

I suggest these hints, as what occurred to me on reading the Evangelist—

Now I have my pen, I should like to know what you think about bringing the matter before the Board, another year:— Suppose various ecclesiastical bodies, could be persuaded to send up memorials or remonstrances, concerning the evasive character of the last report:— & try to get something decisive as to slave-holding: or should the whole matter rest here?? It has occurred to me, that there are ecclesiastical bodies enough, who do not like this report, to make a formidable show & front, if by correspondence & interchange of sentiment, they could know each other & act together. Unless the matter should be brought up in some such way, it will be summarily kicked out—

Yours, G. W. Perkins.

slave, & liable to all the legal incidents of slavery, through without personal abuse — a he can 2d, reject & repudiate the relation & all the right flowing from it; — & must explicitly inform B, that he can go where he chooses; — remove to Connecticut or Canada, or if preferring to remain with him, shall receive the same wages as any freeman —

Now in this second case, there is a legal relation, for which A is not guilty — But this is not slave-holding: — in no sense of the word, nor by any usage, would such a man be called a slave-holder. This is not the case of those Cherokees brought to the notice of the Board: — they were said to be, & the Board did not deny it, — slave-holders: — i.e. men who took advantage of a wicked law, to hold fellow beings in the condition of slaves, & perpetually liable, at the caprice of the owner, or in case of his death, to the horrible incidents of that condition. This is not the case of a mere legal relation: — the Board were not called upon to say any thing about such a mere relation — & Dr. Bacon is perpetually arguing about this mere legal relation: — But he being before them the case of slave-holders, who voluntarily & wilfully act & hold men, in a base & servile condition: — he do not ask the Board to condemn them merely for being in that relation; — but for holding men in that relation, & liable to all its revolting incidents.

Now were I to argue the matter with the Dr. I should aim to bring out this matter plainly, & show that neither he, nor the Board, met the point at issue; but are arguing about a matter, concerning which there is no difference of opinion — I think the public could be made

shall cease: & that C, who is now D's wife, shall be the wife of A— that A & C, shall be man & wife, and that all the legal liabilities, & pecuniary responsibilities, of man & wife, shall exist between A & C— Now here is a legal relation— Neither A. B, C. nor D, are by the supposition to blame for the law, nor for any thing which the law does, or authorizes to be done.

Now commences individual action. A, can take advantage of the law: take C as his wife;— & use her as such— All say, he is guilty of adultery, & that the legal relation & the law, only makes the case the worse;— as a legal atrocity, has more marks of cold bloodedness, and cowardice & malignity, than any other.

Or, A, can utterly reject, repudiate, & abhor the law:— Most publickly by words, & most strictly by deeds, eschew the law & the relation— most sacredly regard his own wife as still his own, & D's wife, as D's— let them & every body else, know this.

Now this last case, is the case of a legal relation, for which A, is not guilty: & analogous to this, would Dr. Bacon have the world believe is the condition of certain persons, whom he calls, slaveholders.

But this is not the case: the slaveholder is like the first case. The law institutes a certain relation between the man A, & the man B: declaring that B, is the slave of A, & that certain legal liabilities, shall follow from that relation— Now A, can take either of two courses. He can take take advantage of that legal relation, & hold B, in that condition of a

G. W. Perkins
Meriden, Feb. 14/46.

14

Meriden. Feb. 14. 1846

Dear Sir.

As you wrote to me about Dr. Bacon's communications to the Evangelist, I will take the liberty of reading on a two thoughts which have occurred to me while reading those articles.

Dr. Bacon says, — & makes it the chief ground of his argument, & of his objection to your course of reasoning — that you wished the mere relation, of slave & owner, to be declared a sin on the part of such owner; — & that the Board & himself would not declare it such. As he presents it, the matter appears plausible & satisfactory to most readers.

Now as I understand you, he does not rightly state the precise point of difference, & is arguing not against your position, but one which he has made up for you.

There is a wide difference between the existence of a certain legal relation, made by law, and which in some cases, the individual cannot prevent, and the use, which the individual may make of the relation so constituted. Thus for instance, the law, may declare that the marriage relation existing between A & B,